

## THANKS TO JACKSON.

HOW GRATEFUL CITIZENS HONORED THE HERO OF NEW ORLEANS.

Crowning the Sturdy General and Democrat With Laurel in the Sight of the Multitude—How the Crescent City Celebrated Seventy-nine Years Ago.



IT LACKS but one of being four-score years, on Jan. 8, 1894, since Andrew Jackson fought and won the battle of New Orleans—a battle that, all things considered, stands without parallel in the annals of human fighting. The celebration of thanksgiving with which the hero was received by the people of New Orleans a few days after the battle was characteristic of the people and the times.

The story of the fight has often been told. The fact, not known for some weeks afterwar, that the treaty of peace was signed at Ghent a day and a fortnight before the battle does not detract a jot from the fame of the sturdy soldier who won along with his victory over the British the idolatry of his contemporaries and a shrine in the hearts of Americans as long as the republic shall last.

Jackson did some hard fighting in Florida just before he went to New Orleans. Victory had been uniformly with his arms, and his coming was eagerly awaited at the Crescent City. As soon as he arrived on Dec. 3, 1814, he set about putting the city in a state of defense. On Dec. 23 he made the celebrated night attack on the first division of the British, which had effected a landing some eight miles down the river from the city. The losses on both sides from this engagement were about 200 killed and wounded, equally divided. On New Year's day there was another engagement, which resulted in defeat for the British. Then both sides began to prepare for what both thought was sure to be a decisive engagement as far as New Orleans was concerned, little dreaming that neither had any further cause to fight.

The British forces numbered 12,000 men. There were but 5,000 Americans, and hardly half of them fired a shot during the short, hot fight that began with daybreak on that January morning 79 years ago. When the contest was over, the loss in killed to the English footed up 700, in wounded twice as many and in prisoners 500. The Americans lost but 8 killed and 13 wounded, and but 25 minutes elapsed between the firing of the first and last shots.

It was not until Jan. 21 that Jackson with his army re-entered New Orleans. The conquering hosts were met in the suburbs by an enthusiastic throng, including almost the entire population of the city, of all ages and both sexes, and were greeted with the most extravagant expressions of gratitude and delight.

Jan. 23 was set apart by the municipal authorities as a day of thanksgiving. To the preparations for the observance of that day the utmost energies of all were bent. Booming of cannon ushered in the dawn of a typically bright sub-tropical winter morning. During the previous day and night men and women had been busily engaged in decorating with evergreens the old Spanish cathedral in which the religious ceremonies were to be held. In front of the cathedral in the center of the public square, where the equestrian statue of Jackson now stands, a temporary arch of triumph had been erected. It was supported by six Corinthian columns and festooned with flowers and evergreens.

Beneath the arch stood two beautiful little girls holding in their hands a civic crown of laurel. Near them were two young women personating Liberty and Justice. Ranged in two rows, extending from the arch to the cathedral, were young girls, the very flower of the creole beauty of that city, full of female loveliness, robed in white, veiled in blue gauze and each bearing on her brow a silver star. These personated the states and territories of the Union that the hero of the day had done so much to preserve from the vandal hand of the British invader. Each of these girls carried a basket of flowers and a flag bearing the name of the state or territory she represented. Behind each a lance upholding a shield.



PLACED THE CROWN ON HIS HEAD, on which was inscribed the arms of the state or territory represented, was stuck in the ground. These lances were joined by evergreen festoons.

When all was ready, General Jackson, accompanied by his staff, passed through the gate of the grand square, and, while cannon roared and the populace cheered and shouted, passed between the lines of Planche's New Orleans creole battalion to the raised floor of the arch. As he advanced he bowed with a stately motion, and the little girls placed the civic crown upon his head. Then the most beautiful of all the creole maidens of New Orleans, a Miss Kerr, who had been chosen to personify Louisiana, spoke for her native state and city words of thanks and congratulation to the victor of New

Orleans. When he had spoken in a few short phrases, he passed on between the rows of young women, who strewed the ground before him with flowers as he walked.

The Abbe du Bourg met the hero and his staff at the cathedral door. This high priest was attired in all the splendor and majesty of his pontifical robes and supported by a college of clergymen in priestly garments, and the multitude was hushed while the simple words of the girl were amplified into a more sonorous address of gratitude by the lips of the cleric. Then the chief was escorted to a conspicuous seat near the altar of the cathedral, and the choir and congregation chanted the "Te Deum Laudamus." This closed the formal service, but it was long because of the press of people, who yearned to see their "savior," as they delighted to call him, at close range, before that simple soldier could make his way to his quarters. The remainder of the day was given up to jollification, and at night there was a general illumination, and the merry-making lasted till the dawn of the following morning.

But it must not be imagined that there was no other feeling than that of gratitude toward the hero of New Orleans. There was a faction in the Louisiana legislature in strong opposition to the general sentiment of adoration for the general, and its power was such that when the officers and troops were thanked by resolution for defending the city and state the leader's name was omitted from the list of those to whom gratitude was expressed. This open slap in the face set the people ablaze, and to add to the excitement a sheet was circulated at the instigation of a member of the legislature wherein divers acts of the victor and his prolongation of martial law were vehemently attacked. This stirred Jackson's blood, and he ordered the arrest of the legislator. Judge Hall of the United States supreme court issued a writ of habeas corpus in the case, but the prisoner was not released, and more, the judge's action was declared to be a violation of martial law by Jackson, who promptly expelled him from the city. There came a time of course when martial law must cease, and then the judge returned to New Orleans and had his innings.

Before his bar the general was haled, and promptly he obeyed. His entry into the courtroom was not noticed at



LIFTED HIM TO THEIR SHOULDERS.

first, as he wore civilian's dress, but when he was recognized there was a mighty cheer. The judge trembled, but Jackson smiled and said:

"Proceed with your sentence. There is no danger here. There shall be none, for the same hand that protected the city from the invader will protect this court."

Then the judge drew a long breath and imposed a fine of \$1,000 for contempt of court. With but a murmur the military man drew out his check-book and wrote his name at the bottom of a slip of paper for that amount. The crowd watched in silence for a moment, and then broke loose in hisses for the judge and cheers for the general. As Jackson stepped into the street he was lifted upon the shoulders of a dozen men, who placed him in a carriage, and releasing the horses dragged him to the house of a friend, where he addressed the multitude in temperate phrase, and entreated them to show their appreciation of the blessings of the peace he had won for them by obeying the laws of their country.

Shortly after this Jackson returned to his estate in Tennessee, which he had left to prosecute the war on the gulf coast. There for some time he lived in the log house that still stands near the famous Hermitage built some years later to please his wife. There in the woods he was forced to begin anew the battle of life, for he had suffered serious pecuniary loss during the war by reason of mismanagement of his estate, and was forced to sell off the improved part of his lands and set about to rescue fresh acres from the wilderness. The victory of New Orleans was commemorated by a small medal, duplicates of which were circulated freely through the country, but the \$1,000 which Jackson paid for contempt of court was not refunded to him for 30 years or more, and then by special act of congress.

It was 13 years after the battle of New Orleans, in 1833, that Jackson was elected president of the United States. He made a gallant fight for the high honor in 1824, and in fact then secured a larger number of electoral and popular votes than any other candidate, but the electoral votes of Henry Clay were turned over to John Quincy Adams, who took the seat that rightfully belonged to Jackson. When the hero of New Orleans did enter the White House, he made up for lost time in the vigor with which he carried out his policy. He served two terms, during which he strengthened his hold upon his worshippers—a weaker term would not properly describe his adherents—and deepened the lines that divided him from his opponents, and, as during his military career, managed to "keep things moving" every day.

Andrew Jackson was born in 1767 in North Carolina and died at the Hermitage in Tennessee in 1845.

I. D. MARSHALL  
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